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EDUCATING OUR CHILDREN:

PARENTS & SCHOOLS TOGETHER

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A Report to the President

Lauro F. Cavazos
Secretary of Education

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A REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT

Lauro F. Cavazos

Secretary of Education

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 17, 1989

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DOMESTIC POLICY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: Parental Role in Education

On January 14, 1989, the President approved the Report of the Working Group on the Parental Role in Education, and directed the Department of Education to print and distribute it to parent groups, educators, state and local officials and interested citizens.

Donald Paul Hodel

Donald Paul Hodel
Chairman Pro Tempore

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EDUCATING OUR CHILDREN: PARENTS AND SCHOOLS TOGETHER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Parents play a crucial role in providing their children with the values and skills essential to success in school and in later life. Parents have a responsibility to participate actively in the education of their children by encouraging good study habits, monitoring homework, nurturing creativity, curiosity, and confidence, and demanding the best possible schools for their children. To this end, parents must be involved in helping their children learn and in selecting a quality education matched to their children's needs.

Research reveals that parents spend far too little time helping their children and that those children who are most in need of extra assistance get the least amount. For example:

- Parents of three to five-year-olds read to their children an average of two minutes a day on weekdays and three minutes a day on weekends.
- Parents of children in schools with high poverty were only one-fifth as likely to help their children with homework as were parents whose children attended schools with low poverty levels.

Yet effective parent involvement is related to better student learning. Regardless of their educational level or income, parents' expectations for their children, the value they place on education, and their sustained involvement with schooling all influence their children's chances of success in school.

Parent involvement includes parent training programs, comprehensive family support services, school-based management reforms, and other forms of support to schools by parents, as well as the more traditional practices such as parent/teacher conferences. Effective parent involvement occurs in an atmosphere of mutual respect; all too often the attitudes and competencies of both parents and educators pose barriers to parent involvement.

Informed parent choice in the selection of their children's school or school program builds commitment to education. Eighty percent of magnet schools in 15 urban school districts produced higher achievement scores than their district average, according to a 1983 study. Vouchers, tuition tax credits, and open enrollment plans are current efforts to surmount the barriers presented by the organization of schools to provide parents with choice in schooling.

Major education, political, and business organizations have recently called for initiatives in parent involvement and choice. In addition, Federal, State, and local government and organizations are actively exploring a variety of approaches to parent participation. The promise of these activities provides an impetus for a basic reform of schools that emphasizes parent involvement and choice. To this end, the report makes recommendations to parents, schools, States and local school districts, leadership organizations, and the U.S. Department of Education. The recommendations focus on the following actions:

Parents should:

- Inculcate values and habits that encourage their children to do well in school and to value education;

- Support the school and their children's teachers by taking responsibility for their children's school attendance, discipline, and homework;
- Meet their obligations to the school by learning about the school's expectations and requirements, and opportunities for parent involvement;
- Volunteer to assist school staff; and
- Join with other parents to improve the school.

Schools should:

- Respect parents' concerns and values;
- Provide encouragement and access;
- Provide clear information about school expectations;
- Initiate regular contacts with parents;
- Help parents assist their children with schoolwork; and
- Offer parent training programs, following principles of effective adult learning.

States and local school districts should:

- Increase parent choice in selecting public schools by permitting children to cross school and district boundaries;

- Coordinate fragmented programs that serve children with special needs;

- Decentralize school management to the extent feasible, allowing parents an active role in school decision-making; and

- Eliminate State regulations that impose unduly restrictive burdens on parents who school their children at home.

The U. S. Department of Education should:

- Make parent involvement and choice a priority.

To achieve this result, the Department should:

- Announce this priority at a meeting on education with the Governors and Chief State School Officers.

- Develop a national coordinated effort in parent involvement and choice, meeting with leaders of parent involvement groups and associations that have recently issued statements on these topics;

- Develop publications on promising practices;

- Support research and demonstration projects;

- Promote teacher training in effective parent involvement; and

- Encourage a clearinghouse on parent involvement and choice.

CHAPTER ONE

NEED FOR PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND PARENT CHOICE PROGRAMS

Parents play a crucial role in providing their children with the values and skills which are essential to success in school and in later life. A parent is a "child's first and most influential teacher" and has a responsibility to participate actively in that child's education. This responsibility includes encouraging good study habits, monitoring homework and academic programs, and nurturing creativity, curiosity, and confidence (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). In the context of schooling, parent involvement describes a relationship between families and schools in which parents and educators work together to provide the best possible environment for the schooling of children.

An aspect of education reform efforts nationwide, parent involvement takes several forms. Parents participate both by helping their children learn and through the roles they take in relationship to schools and school systems. Parent choice increases involvement in education by allowing parents the opportunity to select the schools their children will attend without regard to traditional school boundaries. Some, such as magnet schools, operate within the public school system. Choice is also exercised when parents select private or home schools for their children.

During the 1980s, educators and policy makers examined the processes of schooling to see how they might be reformed to improve the educational achievement of children. Inevitably, educators realized that while it is the responsibility of the schools to educate all children, their chances for success are much greater when parents are willing to contribute their time and effort to helping their children learn. Increasing

attention, therefore, was paid to the ways in which parents interact with their children and with the schools. The results of studies examining such interactions are disturbing:

- o A 1987 Harris Poll found that more than half of teachers believe that many parents take too little interest in their children's education and fail to motivate them to succeed. A majority of parents agree. The survey also found that both parents and teachers want more contact with each other, but obstacles to more open communication exist, such as differences in teachers' and parents' availability. Both parents and teachers supported immediate notification to parents of problems children have at school.
- o A study by the Foundation for Child Development quantified the level of learning-related activities occurring in the home. The study showed, for example, that the parents of three to five-year-olds read to them an average of two minutes a day on weekdays and three minutes a day on weekends (Timmer et al., 1984).
- o The amount of time spent on studies is strongly related to academic performance. It is the single most important determinant of achievement. Effective use of time at home to supplement instruction at school helps children learn. Too often, those children who need to spend more time at home on learning activities actually spend less.
  - -- Elementary school children who are low achievers are 10 times as likely as high achievers to have no books or to read no books at home.
  - -- Studies of low achievers' families show that parents seldom converse with their children.
  - -- Disadvantaged children are twice as likely as other students to watch more than three hours of television each day. (U.S. Department of Education, 1987).

Taken together, factors such as no book reading, little conversation, and large amounts of television establish a climate in the home that does not promote learning.

- An examination of Chapter 1 schools showed differences in the extent of parent involvement by level of school poverty.
  - -- In schools with high levels of poverty, parents were only half as likely to have informal contacts with teachers as were parents in schools with low poverty.
  - -- Parents of children in schools with high poverty were only one-fifth as likely to help their children with homework as were parents whose children went to schools with low poverty levels (Birman et al., 1987).
- While parents have the primary responsibility for teaching their children the rules of good conduct and monitoring their behavior, schools must enforce disciplinary codes to protect both students and staff from harm. Unfortunately, school safety is threatened by problems such as assaults, vandalism, gang activity, and drug use.
  - -- A 1988 survey of Baltimore students found that 64 percent knew of someone who had brought a gun to school in the past month; 60 percent knew of someone who had been shot, assaulted, or robbed in the past year; and almost 50 percent of male respondents had themselves brought a weapon to school in the past year (Lofton, 1988).
  - -- In the 1985-86 school year, California schools reported over 162,000 incidents of school crime and violence.
  - -- In Detroit, all 23 high schools closed for two days in 1987 for community discussions on ways to reduce school crime and violence.

These facts attest to an urgent need for reform in the way in which parents, educators, and children interact. Fortunately,

there is growing evidence that sustained parent involvement and parent choice can make a difference.

EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Research has shown that "programs designed with a strong component of parent involvement produce students who perform better than those who have taken part in otherwise identical programs with less parent involvement" (Henderson, 1988).

Parents affect their children's success in school, regardless of the parents' level of education or income. For example, children are more likely to demonstrate higher achievement and competence levels if their parents have high educational aspirations and expectations for them (Hanson and Ginsburg, 1985).

- Involved parents may also benefit from improved relationships with their children and with schools and educators (Henderson, 1988).
- The way parents influence their children's motivation and behavior contributes at least as much to their children's academic performance as do such factors as income, education, or marital status. The success in school of recent immigrant children attests to their families' beliefs in the value of a good education (Caplan et al., 1985).
- Among children from low-income families, the college-bound are more than twice as likely to say their parents expected them to attend college as are those students who complete their education with a high school diploma (Hanson and Ginsburg, 1985).

Much of the research on parent involvement looks at exemplary preschool programs designed "to assist parents to explore various ways to work with their children" and keep them meaningfully

involved in the program activities (Burkett, 1982, p.42; Mitchell & Seligson, 1986). The programs pursue this goal in one or more of the following ways:

- Organizing home visits and other outreach activities by program staff in order to help parents teach their own children.
- Conducting classes on child development and/or videotaping parent-child interaction and providing feedback.
- Inviting participation in parent advisory committees or parent-teacher conferences.
- Involving parents as volunteer or paid staff assistants.

A number of studies confirm that sustained parent involvement in preschool programs is associated with the following outcomes:

- Better academic performance in school as measured by standardized achievement tests (Collins, 1984; Berrueta-Clement et al., 1984; Lazar and Darlington, 1982; Slaughter, 1982; Zigler and Berman, 1983). Irvine (1982) found that the extent of parent involvement was associated with children's scores on three measures of cognitive development (language, reading, and math).
- Regular school attendance, which is related to school achievement and school graduation.
- Decline in classroom behavior problems as measured by teacher ratings (Klein and Durfee, 1979; Lewis et al., 1984; Berrueta-Clement et al., 1984). Children are less likely to develop behavior problems when there are strong attachments between parents and their children (Johnson and Walker, 1987).

Few studies identify the circumstances under which programs enjoy success. Some of them, however, have compared the intensity or type of program activity to examine the effects of different approaches to parent involvement.

- One study examined the effects of the frequency of home visits on the achievement of preschool children from low-income, rural families. Children whose homes were visited showed significantly higher scores than children whose homes were not (Burkett, 1982). No significant differences in scores on standardized verbal achievement tests were found between children who received home visits once a week or every two weeks.
- A study of 2nd and 3rd graders in 250 California elementary schools determined that parent involvement was closely related to student achievement as measured by scores on standardized tests. The findings showed that participation in school activities was stronger than other components of parent involvement such as school-home communication, parent awareness of school operations, parent influence, and teacher-parent relations (Herman and Yen, 1980).

So many combinations of activities are used by various exemplary programs that it may not be possible to attribute specific program outcomes to specific activities or techniques. Yet the strength of the data lend support to a growing interest in providing sustained, comprehensive parent involvement programs, beginning with the families of very young children.

Based on the evidence that effective parent involvement is associated with improved student achievement and parent satisfaction with the educational process, a number of associations have endorsed parent involvement activities. The National Governors' Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the National Association of State Boards of Education, and the National School Boards Association have all attested to the need to involve parents in schools, to provide family education to those in need, and to help parents foster in their children a love of learning.

EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF PARENT CHOICE PROGRAMS

Carrying parent involvement a step further, some educators, policy-makers, and business leaders favor policies which allow parents to choose the schools or school programs in which they want to enroll their children. This approach is based on the idea that encouraging competition among schools creates incentives to offer better quality and more diverse programs in order to attract students and teachers. According to David T. Kearns, President of Xerox Corporation, students, families, and schools would all benefit because communities would be able to identify and use state and local resources more effectively and to provide a wider and more comprehensive array of services to students (Kearns and Doyle, 1988). Furthermore, if parents are involved in selecting the type of education that their children will receive, they become fundamentally involved in their children's schooling.

A variety of mechanisms have been proposed or adopted to expand parent choice, including vouchers, tuition tax credits, open enrollment plans, or home schooling. These approaches are described on pages 30-31.

- One popular form of parent choice is the magnet school. Initially designed to promote desegregation, magnet schools are organized around an academic theme (e.g., science or arts) or approach to learning and draw students from outside regular attendance zones. This enables low-income families to take advantage of opportunities available to families who have more resources. Research has shown that disadvantaged students do well in magnet schools. Students enrolled in magnet schools tend to achieve more and to show more positive attitudes toward school and education.

Disadvantaged students who have transferred to magnet schools also have better attendance, fewer discipline problems, and lower dropout rates (Raywid, forthcoming).

- Home schools, permitted in all 50 States, allow parents the option of educating their children at home in accordance with applicable State regulations. The growth of home schools in recent years is an indication on the part of individual parents of their concern about the education of their children. For those parents who have chosen to teach their children at home, the benefits accrue both to the educational attainment of their children and to family life (Richman and Richman, 1988).

While common sense suggests that parent involvement in education is beneficial, barriers to involvement do exist. Furthermore, in order to develop effective parent involvement, the specific characteristics of parents and families in different life situations need to be identified and addressed by planners.

CHAPTER TWO

BARRIERS TO PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Barriers to parent involvement arise from the characteristics and attitudes of parents and educators. They can result in reducing or closing off communication between parents and schools. Ultimately, children are the ones who suffer.

BARRIERS FROM PARENTS

Parents' priorities, competencies, and knowledge affect their ability to help their children with schoolwork or participate in school-based functions.

Parents face many pressures that compete for a share of their time. Increasing numbers of mothers, for example, are employed full- or part-time outside the home (Zill, 1988).

- 65 percent (21.5 million women) with children less than age 18 work or are currently looking for work.
- 51 percent of children less than age 6 have mothers who work either full- or part-time.
- 42 percent of children ages 5-13 whose mothers work spend time after school without supervision; of these, 1 in 10 was unsupervised 3 or more hours.

With the increase in the number of single parent families and of families in which both parents work outside the home, more parents find that work and household commitments reduce time available for parent involvement activities. Parents with limited education and other special needs may feel particular constraints on their ability to help their children. For example:

- Parents with limited education may underestimate the importance of the role they play in educating their

children. They may be unaware that actions such as monitoring their children's television viewing, talking to them, or seeing that they get enough sleep, support their children's education. In addition, some parents who have themselves had negative experiences with schooling are reluctant to become involved in helping their children with their education; they may not feel adequate to the task.

- Parents who have difficulty reading and writing in English are hampered in their ability to help their children with homework or read to them for pleasure. Parents with limited English proficiency may also find it hard to communicate with the schools, for example, in getting information about school programs for which their children are eligible, filling out required forms, or asking teachers for information about their children's progress.
- Lack of information about how the school and school system operate can also act as a barrier to parent involvement. Parents may not have the information, self-confidence, or social skills to make inquiries or raise objections to actions on the part of teachers and administrators. Schools, on the other hand, may either withhold information which affects parents in their role as decisionmakers or misconstrue or ignore parents' legitimate needs and concerns.

BARRIERS FROM SCHOOL STAFF

Educators' priorities, attitudes, and skills may act as barriers to effective parent involvement. Teachers, like parents, face continuous demands on their time. A need to involve parents may be seen by them as yet another demand for which time is not available. Unless the advantages of parent involvement are evident to teachers and administrators, they will wonder whether it is worth the effort.

Sometimes, school staff see parents--particularly low income or minority parents--as a part of the problem rather than the solution. They may not believe that such parents have the desire or the ability to help their children. Furthermore, many strategies for parent involvement "have typically defined the content, the structure and the scheduling of parent-involvement activities on the school's terms. Such school-based programs have tended to engage the participation of advantaged parents, but not of low-income parents" (McLaughlin and Shields, 1987).

Parent involvement can be seen as a threat to the status quo within the schools and to the authority of educators. Educators who feel this way limit contacts with parents and fail to share information with them. They take a narrow view of the role of parents, insisting that only professional educators know what is best for children.

Interviews with teachers, principals, superintendents, and parents show differing views on effective parent roles. These kinds of problems are highlighted by several examples. In one study, although teachers and other school personnel thought that parent involvement was important for student achievement, the educators disagreed with parents on what parents should do. Parents were willing to participate in many ways, ranging from helping their children with homework to serving as members on curriculum and policy committees. Teachers and principals, however, preferred to restrict parents' roles to traditional activities such as attending class plays or holding bake sales. Superintendents and school board members, on the other hand, thought that it was appropriate for parents to serve in decision-making capacities (Williams and Stallworth, 1983-84).

Teachers may not know how to involve parents in effective ways. One study examined the extent to which teachers used and liked various forms of parent involvement. A number of teachers encouraged parents to read to their children or take them to the library, traditional forms of parent involvement with young children. Few teachers, however, developed at-home activities designed to encourage family conversation, e.g., asking parents to discuss television programs with their children, although many teachers supported this idea. The same study found that only the most experienced teachers were successful in promoting informal learning at home through games and activities that took advantage of the home environment (Becker and Epstein, 1982).

The design of effective parent involvement programs takes creativity and flexibility. Educators need to learn how to structure parent involvement programs which are responsive to parents' needs, interests, and time constraints.

LEGAL RIGHTS OF PARENTS

Under Supreme Court precedents, parents do not have consistently well-defined constitutional rights to control their children's education. The U.S. Constitution does not specifically address education and, in general, it is left to the State and local government rather than the Federal government. Nor do the guarantees in the Bill of Rights, each focused on specific rights, necessarily give parents broad rights over the schooling of their children.

Parents do, however, have certain legal rights as to the choice of schools for their children. In 1925, the Supreme Court held that the State may not compel parents to send their children to public, as opposed to private, schools. See Pierce v. Society of Sisters, 268 U.S. 510 (1925). As to the authority of parents to

avoid formal schooling for their children altogether, the Supreme Court has not ruled on the constitutionality of compulsory education in general; however, in a very limited decision based upon the unique circumstances and religious beliefs of the Amish, the Court held that application of compulsory schooling laws after grade eight violates the Free Exercise Clause as applied to the Amish. See Wisconsin v. Yoder, 406 U.S. 205 (1972).

Apart from Federal constitutional rights, all States allow parents to educate their children at home, subject, in some cases, to State regulation. Some States (as discussed elsewhere in this report) have also adopted choice plans giving parents specified rights to choose schools for their children.

Compared to the rights related to choice of school, parents have fewer legal rights to influence or control the educational practices within the public schools. Because of the express First Amendment protection for free exercise of religion and prohibition of an establishment of religion, parents asserting legal rights related to religious exercise or instruction seem more likely to obtain judicial remedies than those whose concerns are not related to religion. Religion-based claims do not always prevail, however, as the recent cases involving challenges to textbooks in Tennessee and Alabama illustrate. (See Smith v. Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County, 655 F. Supp. 939 (S.D. Ala. 1987), rev'd, 827 F.2d 684 (11th Cir. 1987); Mozert v. Hawkins County Public Schools, 647 F. Supp. 1194 (E.D. Tenn. 1987), rev'd, 827 F.2d 1058 (5th Cir. 1987), cert. denied, 108 S. Ct. 1029 (1988).) As a general matter, schools have broad discretion to shape the academic curriculum.

All parents do have certain Federal statutory rights as to educational institutions that receive Federal financial assistance under specific programs of the Department of

Education. These statutory rights include, among others, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, which affords parents the right to review, contest, and restrict the disclosure of their children's educational records; and the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendments, which requires schools to obtain written parental consent before their child participates in psychiatric or psychological examination, testing,or treatment aimed at eliciting information on sensitive subjects, such as politics, sexual behavior and income. Parents of handicapped children also have Federal statutory rights under the Education of the Handicapped Act regarding the education provided to their children. For the most part, parents' rights to participate in a public school's educational process will vary depending on the education laws and governance structure in each State and locality.

The absence of conclusive parent rights over the practices of public schools does not and should not mean an absence of influence or involvement by parents. Parents can exert a substantial measure of influence through the political system. Such solutions are generally preferable to court-imposed solutions, since parent-instituted lawsuits could result in excessive judicial oversight of schools, which would have a stultifying effect on education. As former Secretary of Education William J. Bennett has observed, when parents are forced to resort to the courts for resolution of educational policy issues, it signals a breakdown in the political arena. It is in the interest of both school officials and parents to prevent such breakdowns from occurring by working together toward mutually satisfactory educational practices and policies.

Effective parent involvement must occur in an atmosphere of reciprocity in which the school and parents work together on behalf of children. Given the complex relationships between

parents and school personnel, the conflicting demands on their time and energy, achieving effective parent involvement requires dedication and skill. The payoffs, however, are potentially great. The next section of this report presents examples of reforms designed to improve parent involvement and choice.

CHAPTER THREE
IMPETUS TO REFORM

The growing interest in early childhood education, improving the readiness of young children for school, and increasing the effectiveness of schooling is influencing the interactions between schools and parents. It has long been evident that parents play a crucial role in teaching their children and in providing the values and skills that are indispensable to success in school and in later life. Yet too often, school staff and parents are opponents rather than partners, blaming each other for children's problems rather than working together to surmount them. To correct this situation, policy makers, educators, and business leaders are joining together in new efforts to encourage parent-school partnerships.

LEADERSHIP PROPOSALS

In 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education published its findings in A Nation at Risk which dramatized the need for reform of the Nation's schools. The report focused on secondary schools and was the catalyst for a broad and deep reform movement. In acknowledgment of the fact that reform needs a broad base of support, the report called upon parents to demand the best of schools, participate actively in their children's education, and provide a living example of positive values and expectations. Inevitably, reformers turned to the early years of formal education and even beyond to examine children's initial readiness for school, particularly those children at risk of educational failure. To improve the opportunities for these children and to reinforce learning for all children, a number of leadership organizations have issued recent policy statements that emphasize comprehensive, sustained, and early involvement of

parents. Some of these statements are outlined below:

- Early Childhood and Family Education: Foundations for Success is the 1988 theme of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). With a focus on families of children at-risk, CCSSO states a need for "access to and availability of comprehensive services to address the health, social, nutritional, transportation, and educational needs of these children and their families" (CCSSO, 1988). CCSSO calls on the States and others to provide services to families to promote parenting skills, reduce family isolation, and meet other pressing family needs that impinge on the security and development of children.

- Right from the Start, a 1988 report of the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE), recommends partnerships between schools and parents based on reciprocity and respect and the inclusion of services in support of family needs. For programs serving children from preschool through grade 3, the report recommends:
  - -- Promoting an environment in which parents are valued as primary influences in children's lives and essential partners in the education of their children.
  - -- Recognizing that the self-esteem of parents is integral to the development of the child and should be enhanced by the parents' positive interaction with the school.
  - -- Including parents in decision making about both their own child and the overall early childhood program.
  - -- Assuring opportunities and access for parents to observe and volunteer in classrooms.
  - -- Promoting exchange of information and ideas between parents and teachers which will benefit the child.

-- Promoting a gradual and supportive transition process from home to school for the child entering school for the first time (NASBE, 1988).

- The Governors' 1991 Report on Education, published by the National Governors' Association, features parent choice and involvement as one of seven highlighted State policy initiatives. The report lists State efforts to help parents contribute to their children's education such as:
  - -- Encourage parents to select their children's school or educational program. Through magnet schools, schools-within-a-school, and postsecondary education, the public schools in some States provide choices for parents.
  - -- Educate parents to stimulate the development of their young children and to help older children do well in school. Programs aim at improving students' academic skills, attitudes toward school, and social behavior.
  - -- Create public/private partnerships for education involving parents, community members, and business that are designed to increase students' expectations and opportunities, as well as their academic success.

- Restructuring the Education System: Agenda for the 1990s, a policy paper of the National Governors' Association, provides another opening for parent involvement and choice. In this paper, the Governors call upon the public schools to decentralize decision making so that greater authority resides at the school site rather than the district or State. Part of the movement to decentralize is a desire to enhance the influence of parents and the public in education decision making. The Governors suggest the establishment of school site councils composed of teachers, administrators, parents, and community members.

- The Committee for Economic Development expressed its concerns for improving the Nation's competitiveness through quality education for all children in Children in Need: Investment Strategies for the Educationally Disadvantaged (1987). This group from the business community emphasized the importance of reaching out to disadvantaged children and their families in the earliest years. Among the recommendations contained in the report are the following:
  - -- Parent education;
  - -- School-based management in which school staff, parents, and students share decision making and accountability for results;
  - -- Family support systems within schools (e.g., health, nutrition, counseling); and
  - -- Business support for parent involvement in their children's education.

These proposals present a unique opportunity to introduce reforms that will strengthen family involvement and parent choice. The next section of this report offers examples of recent State and local programs and activities.

STATE AND LOCAL INITIATIVES

Experience with parent involvement has demonstrated that superficial approaches do not work. Sustained activities, however, can be effective, particularly with families who have low incomes and other special needs. The mounting evidence has moved States, local governments, and school districts to initiate various types of parent involvement programs.

These programs may be categorized into a few broad, but overlapping areas. The following four categories reflect the focus of many of these programs: Parent Training, Family

Support and Education, School-Based Management, and Parents Involved in School Support.

Parent Training Programs help parents teach school-related skills to their children. Programs under this rubric support parents in becoming direct participants in their children's education, offering parents specific strategies to help their children master skills related to their school work.

Individual programs may focus on one academic area, such as reading or mathematics, or may help parents gain the necessary self-confidence and skills needed to support their children's success in school. The following two program models illustrate the variations found within parent training programs:

- Family Math is designed to encourage more students, particularly minorities and females, to study advanced mathematics. Hoping to enlist the aid of parents in this effort, the program provides an opportunity for children to learn math by working beside their parents in an academic setting.

  The Family Math course offers activities that reinforce and supplement the school mathematics curriculum. Classes are usually grouped by grade level and are taught by a teacher, parent, or community worker in a school, church, or home. The course runs for 4 to 8 weeks, with weekly classes, usually in the evening. Class activities include:

  -- The development of problem-solving skills. Students and parents learn to look for patterns, draw pictures and diagrams, work backwards, guess at the answer and then check, and apply a host of other strategies when solving problems.

-- An emphasis on working together. Talking about the activities not only opens the door for parents to help their children, but adds a new dimension to learning.
-- An exposure to all the topics of mathematics. These include geometry, measurement, probability, statistics, estimation, logical thinking, and the use of a calculator as well as numbers and arithmetic.

As of June 1988 more than 1,000 Family Math courses had been taught to 34,000 parents and their children.

o Parent Training Program - Memphis, Tennessee. Believing that school-age children need structure at home and help with their school work, the Memphis City Schools sought to involve parents in an extensive training program that would boost the parents' self-confidence and skill levels.

The program sponsors weekly parent workshops and other sessions held at schools and other convenient locations. The workshops are advertised by radio and through flyers sent to homes. Each workshop focuses on specific issues such as:

-- Discipline--setting rules and enforcing them.
-- Time management--Planning study time and an appropriate bedtime.
-- Planning and monitoring home study--Providing a quiet place to do homework; knowing what work is expected of the children.
-- Building self-esteem--Improving parents' self-concept and giving them confidence in handling their children.
-- Communication skills--Holding conversations with children about learning.
-- Drug/alcohol abuse--Recognizing the dangers of drug and alcohol use and learning what to do about it.
-- Nutrition--Planning a healthful diet for the family.

Interviews conducted with parents who participated in the program revealed that the parents believed the program to be successful, especially in giving them a renewed sense of control over their children. Perhaps most important was the parents' personal satisfaction at being directly involved with the education of their children.

- Dr. Dorothy Rich, founder of The Home and School Institute, Washington, D.C., emphasizes the ability of all parents to use the curriculum of the home to teach values and skills. In MegaSkills: How Families Can Help Children in School and Beyond, Dr. Rich focuses on how parents can teach children the "megaskills" of confidence, motivation, effort, responsibility, initiative, perserverance, caring, teamwork, common sense, and problem solving. Practical, enjoyable activities for parents and children are described such as menu planning, making a birthday calendar, examining insects through a magnifying glass, or using bus schedules. Through these and many other ideas, Dr. Rich encourages parents to instill in their children a lifelong love of learning.

Family Support and Education Programs -- This type of program teaches parents about child development and how they can best fulfill their role as competent parents. For families in need, the program may also offer a comprehensive range of services, including social, health, and other support. The components of these programs vary widely, but share similar characteristics. A common thread is the belief that the family environment influences the children's behavior and cognitive development. These programs provide both formal and informal support to parents and their children from infancy until they enter kindergarten.

To get an idea of the range of services offered, and how the programs may differ, the following are brief descriptions of two programs:

- The Beethoven Project began as a pilot program in 1987. It operates out of the Robert Taylor Homes public housing project, which is located in one of the most isolated neighborhoods in Chicago's South Side. In addition to its dismal location, the housing project is also the biggest and poorest in the nation. To help stem the widespread failure of the children who live in the project, this program tries to prepare them both mentally and physically for their entrance into Beethoven Elementary School.

  The program reaches out to pregnant mothers and to all of the children born after January 1, 1987 who live in the housing project. It will provide support until the children enter kindergarten at age five. The Beethoven Project offers intensive and comprehensive support services to all its participants. A small team of project staff work individually with the mothers, offering expertise on child care and nutrition. It also provides a play area, has cooking facilities, a lounge, and medical examination rooms. The staff provides schooling for toddlers and enrolls the older children in a Head Start program.

- Missouri is the first State in the country to require every school district to provide parent education and family support services. The Missouri Parents as Teachers program provides information and guidance to assist parents in giving their children a solid foundation for lifelong development, helping parents reduce stress, and increasing the joys associated with raising children. Beginning in the third trimester of pregnancy and continuing until their child is three years old,

parents receive the following services:

-- Help in stimulating their children's language, cognitive, social, and motor development;
-- Screening of their children's hearing and visual development;
-- Monthly home visits by parent educators;
-- Monthly group meetings with other parents; and
-- Parent resource centers housed in schools, offering learning materials for families and facilities for child care.

In 1985, the Parents as Teachers program was evaluated to assess the program's effects on participating children and their parents compared with a matched group of nonparticipating families. The findings showed that compared to the control group, children in the program demonstrated greater intellectual and language development, were more socially developed, and got along better with adults. The program parents were much more knowledgeable about child-rearing practices, especially the use of constructive discipline, and were more likely to rate their school districts as being responsive to their children's needs.

School-based Management -- This is a strategy for decentralizing decision making that can promote involvement by drawing parents into the schools as part of a working team. School planning and management teams may include community members, school support staff, principals, teachers, parents, and teacher aides. The team makes decisions about the school climate, academic program, and staff development. The team identifies problems that need to be addressed, designs an action plan, implements the plan, and then evaluates the plan, modifying it if necessary.

For school-based management teams to be successful, the group must learn to function as a cohesive unit. The following is a brief description of the "Comer Plan," a school-based management model that has been implemented in over 50 schools nationwide.

- The Comer Plan was developed in 1968 by Dr. James P. Comer when he was the director of the Yale Child Study Center. It follows the premise that many disadvantaged children at about 8 or 9 years old have problems accepting authority and becoming part of the mainstream. To help these children succeed both socially and academically, the Comer Plan relies on the collaborative participation of parents and school to provide the supportive environment needed to encourage children to succeed.

  The program looks to parents as a main source of strength in contributing to the management and governance teams. Parents working on the management teams know that their ideas are welcome and also have the opportunity to voice their concerns about academic and social issues and have a hand in formulating policy that directly affects their children.

  School-based management has worked well for schools participating in Comer programs. For example, since 1980, the dropout rate in New Haven schools has dropped from 42 percent to 15.5 percent. The number of children going on to some form of higher education has increased from 45 percent to 73 percent. A school in Maryland using the Comer Plan reported that its students' scores on the California Achievement Test rose from the 50th percentile to the 80th percentile.

Parents and Community Supporting the Schools -- Parent involvement of this type covers a wide variety of activities. Parents may be involved in functions that directly support the

school such as fund-raising events, monitoring attendance, chaperoning students on field trips, and decorating the school for special events. Another type of parent support is direct parent participation in the instruction of students by aiding teachers in the classroom. Parents may instruct students, help the teachers prepare materials, grade student papers, and apply special skills such as foreign language fluency to help students who have difficulty speaking English.

Parent advisory groups also provide support to the schools. Advisory groups may be required by Federal or State legislation, or used as part of local efforts to generate broad-based support for education programs. Advisory groups may include district and school staff members and community representatives as well as parents. They may assist administrators and staff in making decisions or in establishing policies which affect school budgets, services, and activities.

PARENT CHOICE--EDUCATION REFORM AT ITS BEST

For most families, children are simply enrolled in the neighborhood public school or are assigned to some other school in the district in order to achieve a district-wide goal. If discipline in the assigned school is poor or if the school fails to provide educational equity, children are less likely to succeed. Parents may feel they have no alternative, however, unless they can afford private school tuition, move to a better school district, or teach their children at home. On the other hand, providing choice within the public schools expands opportunities for parent involvement, increases student motivation, and results in higher quality education. It allows families to choose a school best suited to the needs of their children.

Public Opinion on Choice in Education

The 1987 Gallup Poll on Education found that 76 percent of public school parents felt that they "should have the right to choose which local schools their children attend"; 81 percent of nonpublic school parents concurred. Both public and nonpublic school parents felt that parents should have more say in the curriculum offered in public schools (51 and 65 percent respectively), in the choice of instructional materials (42 and 50 percent, respectively), and in the selection of library materials (40 and 47 percent, respectively).

Choosing the schools their children attend increases parent involvement in children's learning right from the start as parents learn what different schools have to offer. Parents are likely to consult friends and neighbors to learn about schools; visit the schools themselves; and talk with the principal and teachers about programs, curricula, and school policies.

According to Richard Green, formerly superintendent of schools in Minneapolis where over two-thirds of the students attend schools of choice, "when parents can choose where their kids go to school, they tend to give a lot of support to that effort" (Snider, 1987). Parents are more willing to take responsibility for something they have chosen.

Competition Among Schools

Choice plans enable schools to develop or emphasize particular programs or philosophies. One school may be highly structured, giving students considerable direction and close supervision. Another may expect students to be highly self-motivating. A third may emphasize team-teaching and interdisciplinary study. As the differences among schools become explicit, the range of education options broadens. Of course, all schools need to teach

the basic, core subjects; however, the core does not constitute the entire curriculum.

By encouraging competition among schools, choice plans stimulate educators' desire to strengthen the curriculum and to improve student performance. Teachers in magnet or alternative schools encounter fewer discipline problems and are able to spend more time planning and delivering instruction. They are able to vary and tailor lessons according to a student's needs and strengths. Magnet school teachers in Los Angeles recommended that the magnet program be expanded because of improvements in students' self-esteem, academic achievement, and postsecondary opportunities. Choice programs also appear to affect teacher morale positively: choice schools in New York State experienced a 50 percent reduction in teacher turnover (Raywid, forthcoming).

Student Achievement

Some research indicates that students learn more in schools of choice. For example, studies of 139 magnet schools in New York State, Los Angeles, and Montgomery County, Maryland, found that students' reading and math scores were above district and/or national averages. Allowing parents to select their children's learning environment appears to enhance students' cognitive and affective outcomes. Other benefits attributed to participation in schools of choice include lower dropout rates, more positive attitudes about school, less vandalism, lower suspension rates, and higher attendance rates (Raywid, forthcoming).

Schools of choice are more likely to produce greater academic gains among minority and low-income students. Buffalo, New York, with the highest proportion of students needing remedial education in New York's five largest cities, launched its magnet schools program in 1976. By 1986, although the city still had the second highest proportion of low-income students, Buffalo had

the lowest proportion of students needing remedial services (Snider, 1987).

Similarly, in District 4 in East Harlem, one of the poorest neighborhoods in New York City, students ranked last in reading scores in 1972. The district's compulsory attendance areas were abolished in 1973 and parents allowed to select the most appropriate school for their child. Today, 64 percent of District 4 students read at or above grade level, while District 4 now ranks 16th of 32 among all districts.

APPROACHES TO SCHOOL CHOICE

Magnet Schools make up about 25 percent of the estimated 10,000 schools of choice (McCurdy, 1985) and tend to be located in larger urban districts. In 1986-87, the number of magnet schools was estimated to be 2,500. Sixty percent of magnet schools are at the elementary level; 17 percent operate at the middle level; and 24 percent at the secondary level. Magnet programs may encompass an entire school, schools-within-schools, and add-on programs that include some proportion of the school's students.

Magnet programs also vary in their attendance zones. The St. Louis area has an inter-district program where 23 suburban districts cooperate with the city school district to exchange students. Montclair, New Jersey's program is unique in that all schools in the district are magnets and students can attend any school. More neighborhood-oriented programs, especially elementary programs like the six school cluster in Washington, D.C., accept students from a small number of neighborhood schools.

Magnet schools are characterized by different types of academic programs including science, math, or foreign languages; the

performing and creative arts; vocational and technical education; and learning methods such as immersion or Montessori programs. Only one-third of magnets base admissions decisions on academic performance; the remainder allocate admissions by lottery or on a first-come, first-served basis. Waiting lists are often long, since magnet schools are very popular: in New York State, 98 percent of parents whose children attend magnet schools would recommend magnet programs to other parents.

Vouchers allow parents to choose any school for their children to attend. Instead of paying tuition, parents "pay" with vouchers which allow the selected schools to receive reimbursement from the local school district. In order to provide schools with incentives to undertake the education of disadvantaged, at-risk, or handicapped children, vouchers issued to the parents of special needs children could be worth more than regular education vouchers.

In Vermont, some districts are allowed to pay tuition for students at any nonsectarian private or public secondary school, even those outside the State. In 1985, 24 percent of Vermont's high school population took advantage of this option.

Tuition Tax Credits offer tax relief to parents who choose to send their children to private schools; thus, private schools can better compete with public schools to attract students. Iowa, which recently enacted a tuition-tax credit plan, provides families with income tax credits (5 percent of the first $1,000 per child).

Open Enrollment Plans operate at the State or district level. For example, Minneapolis, Minnesota, began offering options to parents in 1974. Today, nearly 68 percent of Minneapolis students attend schools of choice. And by 1990, Minnesota will

be the first State to give parents the right to enroll their children in any public school if classroom space is available. Transportation to the school of choice, however, will be the parents' responsibility.

Controlled Choice programs provide intra-district choice among schools, subject to district desegregation guidelines. For example, in 1981, Cambridge, Massachusetts' pioneering desegregation plan abolished K-8 level attendance zones and extended to parents the opportunity to select their preferred school, subject only to space and desegregation requirements. The plan allows parents to choose a minimum of three favored schools, although the system makes the final attendance decisions. A network of staffers assist parents in visiting and observing schools throughout the district.

New York City's high school assignment program allows families of 90,000 students to choose among more than 250 alternative programs. Because of screening procedures or lottery outcomes, however, one-third of the eligible students remain in neighborhood high schools.

Experts have concluded that public schools often do not perform as well as private schools because private schools have more autonomy in budgeting, scheduling, staffing, and curriculum matters. More flexibility for public schools would help them to be more responsive to the diverse needs of their students.

While legislatures can establish minimum standards of achievement, true educational excellence is generated at the school building and community levels. Educators, policy-makers, and parents need to determine how to create the conditions that will foster educational excellence and equity for all students. Promoting schools of choice is one of the more promising ways to accomplish this goal.

CHAPTER FOUR

PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND CHOICE IN U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS

U.S. Department of Education programs for children in elementary and secondary schools offer opportunities for parents to become involved with their children's schools. In recent years, the Department has actively encouraged the introduction of parent choice and involvement within its programs and policy initiatives.

Reagan Administration Initiatives to Expand Parent Choice

- Federal Vouchers. Educational vouchers are designed to open up public schooling to the full benefit of market place competition. As applied to Federal programs, a voucher system would allocate to each child's parents a certificate or voucher that would entitle them to purchase specified sorts of services for their child from any school. In turn, each school that received a voucher could present it to the local educational agency (LEA), which would be required to pay it a share of the LEA's Federal funds. The Administration has three times proposed voucher legislation, but Congress has not enacted any of the proposals.

- Model State Legislation. Earlier this year, the President directed the Department of Education to prepare draft legislation that states could use as a model to promote parent choice in education. Although State and local efforts to expand choice have increased in recent years, there are many areas in which parents who cannot afford private school tuition have no options other than to send their children to their assigned public school. The Appendix to this report includes models of several

approaches to State choice legislation as well as information on some existing State choice plans.

- Magnet Schools. Magnet schools offer an approximation to market-place benefits within the current organization of the public schools. Based on the success of the Magnet Schools Assistance Program in facilitating parent choice, the Department requested a budget increase from $72 million to $115 million for the program for fiscal year 1989. The final appropriation for Magnet Schools is $113.6 million. In 1988, the Department proposed a new program to provide a short period of federal funding for the development and initiation of magnet schools in any LEA. As enacted by Congress, however, the Alternative Curriculum Schools Program (ACSP), is less flexible and is only open to LEAs and schools with a high percentage minority enrollment. Since, under the authorizing statute the ACSP cannot be funded unless at least $165 million is available for the Magnet Schools Assistance Program, the ACSP will not be funded in FY 1989.

- Executive Order on the Family. The Administration's efforts in support of families culminated in Executive Order 12606 (September 1987) in which the President directed all Federal executive agencies to consider the impact on family stability and well-being of policies and regulations. The Executive Order establishes criteria which Federal officials use to assess the impact of proposals and policies on the family.

Other Parent Involvement Provisions

Over the past years, the Department of Education has taken steps to encourage parent involvement throughout its programs. The Department has been particularly interested in policies that can encourage parents to become directly involved in educational

decisions and activities affecting their own children. A common form of parent participation in Federal education programs is involvement of representatives of parent organizations in formal governance structures (such as parent advisory councils) associated with Federal programs.

Chapter 1. The Chapter 1 program of aid for educationally disadvantaged children, the Department's largest elementary and secondary education program, has been the focus of efforts to encourage parent involvement. 1/ Early parent involvement requirements focused on the creation of district-wide and school-wide parent advisory councils (PACs). The Education Consolidation and Improvement Act of 1981 (ECIA), which responded to a widespread desire to ease unnecessarily prescriptive Federal requirements, eliminated the PAC provision. However, the statute maintained the requirement that programs be implemented in consultation with parents.

In 1986, the Department issued Chapter 1 regulations that substantially enhanced these parent involvement activities by requiring each district to adopt a written policy on parent involvement and by emphasizing the importance of direct parent involvement in their children's education. The recent 1938 reauthorization of Chapter 1, which builds on the Department's efforts, establishes six goals for parent involvement. These are:

- Inform parents about the Chapter 1 program and its instructional objectives and methods and the reasons their children were selected.
- Support parent efforts, including training parents and teachers to build a home-school partnership.
- Train teachers and other staff to work with parents.
- Consult with parents about ways in which the school and home can work together.

- Provide opportunities for parents to become informed about and participate in program design, operation and evaluation.
- To the extent practicable, ensure opportunities for the full participation of parents who lack literacy skills or whose native language is not English. 2/

Parent involvement must be "of sufficient size, scope and quality to give reasonable promise of substantial progress towards achieving" those goals. 3/

Chapter 2. The 1981 enactment of the Chapter 2 block grant program superseded over 29 funded categorical programs, a number of which had required the establishment of parent advisory councils. 4/ In place of these requirements, the Chapter 2 statute required local education agencies, in order to receive funds, to certify to the State education agency that they systematically consulted with local parents about the allocation of Chapter 2 funds and the design, planning, and implementation of the programs. The Education Department, through nonregulatory guidance, has encouraged a broad range of forms of parent involvement.

Bilingual Education. Both the Bilingual Education Act (1968) and Federal enforcement of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as interpreted by the Supreme Court in Lau v. Nichols, 414 U.S. 563 (1974), were based on the need for limited English proficient students to learn English. Although the program evolved into one which promoted dual language instruction rather than other strategies, legislative and regulatory modifications now encourage greater local flexibility in selection of instructional modalities.

As reauthorized in 1988, the Bilingual Education Act features five specific legislated types of parent involvement:

- o a parent advisory council requirement for local education agency grantees;
- o parents' rights to information about the selection of their children for bilingual education and about their right to decline the opportunity for their children to participate in the program for their children;
- o an individual determination, shared with the parents, concerning each child's need to continue in the program after 3 years of enrollment;
- o training programs at institutions of higher education to prepare parents to help with programs for limited English proficient students; and
- o a Family English Literacy Program that authorizes funds for teaching English to the parents of children enrolled in one of the other programs under the Act and/or training parents to help their children learn at home. 5/

Special Education. The Education of the Handicapped Act (EHA) (P.L. 94-142, as amended) mandates a free, appropriate public education for all handicapped children and youth whose impairments or disabilities affect their educational performance and who thus need special education and related services. The EHA requires that handicapped children, to the fullest extent possible, be educated with non-handicapped children, for example, in regular classrooms or in resource rooms or special education classrooms in regular education buildings.

An individualized education program (IEP) is developed and reviewed annually for each student who receives special education services. The student's parents or guardian, the teachers, other relevent school personnel, and when appropriate, the student, are required to participate in preparing the IEP. The IEP documents the student's current educational performance, lists short- and long-term goals and the special education services to be

provided, describes the extent to which the student will participate in regular education activities, and states criteria by which the student's performance will be measured against the goals.

The IEP and certain procedural safeguards empower and entitle parents to participate in their handicapped children's education. Parents should participate in the development and review of the IEP. Furthermore, parents may obtain independent evaluation of their child's placement and performance. The school or other service agency must notify parents in writing of any action or changes proposed for the child's placement or IEP. EHA also provides parents with the opportunity for an impartial due process hearing in the event that the parents object to any aspect of the IEP or its implementation.

Parent education programs, which provide knowledge and skills that enable parents to play a role in making decisions concerning their child's education, especially in the IEP process, have been established by many statewide or community-based organizations. Many are run by parents for parents. These organizations provide technical information about disability conditions, resources to help parents stimulate their child's development, information and training pertaining to the rights of disabled children and their parents, and advocacy for special education issues in the development of public policy.

Other Department Programs

Other programs encourage parents to be involved in their children's education. For example, the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act authorizes training for parents and families to help them prevent or treat drug use. Indian Education programs are often designed and operated in conjunction with parent committees, as are migrant education programs.

Two new Federal grant programs authorize expenditures expressly for programs designed to involve parents in their children's education. Even Start authorizes funding to support family-centered education programs which involve parents and children in a cooperative effort to help parents become full partners in the education of their children and assist children in reaching their full potential as learners. A similar program, the Family-School Partnership (FSP), is a component of the newly authorized Fund for the Improvement and Reform of Schools and Teaching. The FSP is designed to encourage Chapter 1-eligible LEAs to increase involvement of families in improving educational achievement of children in preschools, elementary and secondary schools.

Numerous Department of Education research and dissemination efforts have aimed at expanding parent involvement in education. A new research project, for example, will examine the characteristics of exemplary programs and present case studies to illustrate promising approaches. To encourage widespread awareness of the importance of parent involvement in their children's education, recent Department reports and handbooks have encouraged parent involvement and described ways in which parents can become involved in various aspects of education. Major reports include: A Nation at Risk; What Works: Research in Teaching and Learning; Schools That Work: Educating Disadvantaged Children; Schools Without Drugs; Becoming a Nation of Readers: What Parents Can Do; and AIDS and the Education of Our Children: A Guide for Parents and Teachers.

Federal Barriers to Parent Involvement and Choice

Despite opportunities such as those described above, substantial barriers exist which limit parent involvement and choice.

Constraints on Equitable Service to Students in Private Schools. Although Federal aid for elementary and secondary education is typically available only to public school entities, most Federal aid is subject to a statutory requirement that public school authorities participating in Federal programs provide "equitable services" to students whose families have chosen to send them to private schools. This requirement reflects a compromise between those who wanted aid to be available only for public schools and those who felt that children whose families chose to send them to private schools should not be penalized by losing access to Federally funded education benefits.

The traditional method of providing equitable services, sending public school teachers into private schools to provide special services to students otherwise qualified for the Federal program, was dealt a harsh blow in 1985 by the Supreme Court's decision in Aguilar v. Felton, 473 U.S. 402 (1985). Over strong Administration objections, the Court ruled that this method of service delivery to children in sectarian schools under Chapter 1 was unconstitutional because it excessively entangled church and state.

The Department has since taken all available steps to ensure that local and State education agencies provided equitable services while complying with the Supreme Court's prohibition of on-premises instruction to children in sectarian schools, and Congress has recently appropriated $19.8 million for the first year of funding to facilitate Chapter 1 service delivery to students in private schools. Nevertheless, this Supreme Court decision makes it difficult for students whose parents have chosen to enroll them in sectarian schools to maintain equitable access to Federally-funded education programs.

Categorical Programs That Limit Parent Options. Another constraint on the ability of parents to influence the design and implementation of the education their children receive stems from the existence of numerous categorical programs each designed by Congress to address a specific need in a specific way. Fund recipients must maintain an audit trail of documentation demonstrating that the funds were spent properly in compliance with the varied Federal conditions that apply to each program, and Federal funds generally may not be commingled with State and local funds.

By their nature, therefore, categorical programs limit the discretion of States and LEAs that receive Federal dollars to respond to local needs and parent preferences about program design. For example, the existence of separate categorical programs can make it impractical for LEAs to create joint programs using both Federal Chapter 1 and State compensatory education funds--even if parents and school officials believe that a joint approach would be more efficient and effective than maintaining separate programs.

Another unanticipated consequence has been a fundamental change in the classroom experience of young children. Prior to the advent of the special programs in the 1960's, students in grades K-3 spent virtually their whole day together under the direction of one adult. It was thought that the kind of stability brought about by relating to only one teacher facilitated the socialization of students into school and learning. Increasingly, however, elementary school children are taken out of their classroom for Federally-funded and other special activities such as computer instruction, Chapter 1 instruction, bilingual instruction, testing by a hearing specialist, special education instruction, counseling, or participation in a gifted

and talented program. The result--particularly for children with special needs--can be a fragmented learning experience.

The Administration initiated an effort to consolidate categorical programs into more flexible funding authorities. As modified by Congress, the proposal was enacted as a block grant to States under Chapter 2 of the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act of 1981. However, Congress has since created more than 40 new categorical programs.

As this overview of Department of Education programs has shown, the Department has long recognized the rights and responsibilities of parents in the education of their children, and has played an important role in promoting parent involvement and choice. Parents, educators, government officials, and others responsible for the education and well-being of children need to work together to develop effective parent involvement programs. The final section of this report makes specific recommendations to achieve this goal.

Footnotes to Chapter 4

1. This program, originally authorized as Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, was reauthorized in 1981 as Chapter 1 of the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act of 1981. In 1988, the program was reauthorized by P.L. 100-297, which reconstituted it as Chapter 1 of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. This report refers to the program as Chapter 1.
2. See Sec. 1016(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by P.L. 100-297.
3. Id. Sec. 1016(a).
4. Chapter 2 of the ECIA has since been reauthorized by P.L. 100-297 as Chapter 2 of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. This report simply calls the program Chapter 2.
5. See Sec. 7001 - Sec. 7022 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by P.L. 100-297.

CHAPTER FIVE

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STRENGTHENING PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND CHOICE

Parent involvement and choice will be facilitated only when parents, school staff, government officials, and leaders of national, State, and local organizations collaborate in carrying out their responsibilities for the education of children. The following set of recommendations addresses actions that should be taken by parents, schools, States and local school districts, leadership organizations, and the U.S. Department of Education to make effective parent involvement and choice a reality.

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

Success in school takes hard work. It requires putting aside immediate pleasures until tasks are done and believing that long-term goals can be realized. To motivate children to do their best, parents and guardians should:

- Set examples through their own conduct and explain to their children the ideals and values underlying their actions. The importance of honesty, courage, and persistence can also be dramatized by pointing out the negative consequences of mistakes or failing to live up to ideals.
- Relate personal experiences and family stories that reinforce the message that effort, persistence, and good character count.
- Give children responsibilities at home to foster self-reliance, industriousness, resourcefulness, and routines for work.
- Teach children to plan ahead by requiring them to place schoolwork and household chores before play. Parents should set a definite bedtime to help their children prepare for school.

- o Praise good behavior and performance of children as well as correcting their misconduct.
- o Encourage children to compete in school and to make the effort needed to succeed in their studies in the same way they might compete in sports. Parents should realize that their children may be under pressure from their peers not to do well in academics; strong support from parents and a belief in their own abilities will help the children resist pressure not to succeed in school.
- o Establish family rules, such as setting curfews and restricting activities during the school week, that provide youngsters with structure and a guide to their actions.
- o Expect to see homework assignments each day. Parents should question their children and school authorities if homework appears to be the exception, not the rule.
- o Make effective use of leisure time at home. This includes:
  - -- Talking to children about their experiences. This helps them extract meaning from events, a skill important to success at school.
  - -- Restricting television viewing. Parents should limit the amount of time their children spend watching television and monitor their choice of programs.
- o Show support for the school and their children's teachers by:
  - -- Getting their children to school on time, regularly, and with needed schoolwork and supplies.
  - -- Supporting school disciplinary measures.
  - -- Getting to know their children's teachers, attending school meetings, and contacting the school when they have a concern.
- o Learn about the school's expectations and practices by talking directly with the principal and teachers, observing classrooms, and talking with other parents. Parents should

look for such information as:

-- The school's objectives for its students: academic content, skills to be mastered, and the amount of homework expected.
-- The school's discipline policy, both what the rules are and the consequences for breaking them.
-- Standards for testing, placing, and promoting children. Parents have the right to know about assessment procedures and their use in helping the children learn.

- o Volunteer to assist school staff. Areas in which parents have provided invaluable help include:
  -- Checking on attendance and tardiness;
  -- Supervising students in the library, cafeteria, and on the playground; and
  -- Improving school facilities and grounds.
- o Join with other parents to improve the school. Often, a group of parents can be more effective than just one person. Some parents work through an existing parent-teacher organization; others start with the parents of their children's friends or parents who live nearby.

WHAT SCHOOLS CAN DO

School staff members can provide parents with information and access if they:

- o Respect parents' concerns and values.
- o Provide clear information about school expectations to students and their parents. This information should include:
  -- The code of standards for students, covering the rules of conduct and penalties for misconduct. The code should be accompanied by a note for parents to sign and return, acknowledging that they understand the code.
  -- School academic standards and policies.

-- School academic standards and policies.
-- Expectations for parent responsibilities. This understanding may take the form of a contract with parents in which they agree to support school policies on attendance and discipline and to monitor their children's homework, television viewing, and outside activities.

- o Initiate regular contacts with parents concerning their children's performance and conduct, and hold them accountable for their children's attendance. A computerized report card is insufficient; it should be supplemented by parent-teacher conferences, telephone calls, informal notes, and even home visits by school staff.
- o Send home simple descriptions of the topics being covered in class to foster parent interest and stimulate parent-child conversations about school. To encourage discussions, teachers can give assignments that require children to ask questions of their parents and relatives.
- o Provide encouragement and access. Many parents need encouragement to get involved. Schools can:
  -- Send home notes when children are doing well in school, as well as when problems arise.
  -- Open up the classroom for parent observation and hold social events at which parents and teachers can become acquainted in a friendly, informal atmosphere.
  -- Inform parents about how to reach the principal and the teacher.
  -- Hold parent conferences at hours convenient for employed parents.
- o Help parents assist their children with schoolwork. Many parents may want to provide more direct academic help to their children, but those with less formal schooling may lack the confidence or the know-how. To help these

parents, schools can:

-- Establish teacher homework hotlines in which teachers are available for immediate information needs, or use other students to tutor their peers.
-- Inform parents about specific learning activities they can do with their children.
-- Make available materials with projects to be done at home by children and their parents.
-- Show parents the importance of everyday actions that emphasize the value of education, such as encouraging their children to read.

- o Provide educational programs for parents. For example, some schools sponsor classes in how to be a more effective parent, hold courses in the basic skills for parents and their children, or make arrangements for parents without a high-school degree to obtain their general educational development (GED) certificate.
- o Follow principles of effective adult learning in designing and operating parent involvement programs.

WHAT STATES AND LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS CAN DO

- o Establish magnet schools and other arrangements that allow children to cross school and school district boundaries, and permit parent choice in selecting public schools or programs.
- o Coordinate fragmented special programs to serve disadvantaged students more effectively. Within the limits of their authority, States and districts can encourage local units to consolidate categorical funds and inform school staff about effective ways to coordinate special programs within the school.
- o Forge new partnerships between States and districts, and between districts and schools, in which the local unit

assumes greater control over determining budget priorities, hiring staff, and setting and meeting instructional objectives. At the same time, the State or district provides incentives such as release time for staff and assesses progress, holding the local district or school accountable for results. Parents should be integrally involved in such efforts.

- o Encourage parents to participate in the development of curriculum guidelines and the selection of instructional materials. Parents and school officials need to work together to assure that educators and the schools are aware of and responsive to parents' concerns.
- o Examine State regulations to see whether they impose unduly restrictive burdens on parents who choose to teach their children at home. Alter those regulations when appropriate to facilitate effective home-schooling.

WHAT LEADERSHIP ORGANIZATIONS CAN DO

- o Move to make policy recommendations a reality.
- o Teach parents and educators about the need for effective parent involvement and choice. Provide them with the skills to carry out such programs.

WHAT THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CAN DO

- o The Secretary of Education shall make parent involvement and choice a priority through the following actions:
  - -- Convene a meeting of the Governors and Chief State School Officers to announce and discuss the Department's priority, as part of a conference in education.
  - -- Meet with key representatives of parent involvement organizations such as the President of the National PTA to examine needs and strategies.

-- Convene a meeting of the associations that have recently issued position or policy statements about parent involvement and choice to discuss how they can work together to formulate policy recommendations. Leadership organizations from early childhood education, public schools, and government would be included.
-- Develop publications on promising practices, including ways in which teachers and parents have turned traditional activities such as parent/teacher conferences or homework into effective vehicles for parent involvement.
-- Support improved parent involvement through research and demonstration projects that develop and evaluate promising approaches.
-- Encourage training for teachers (inservice and preservice) in effective parent involvement. Incorporate this within existing Department programs and share leadership with teacher training institutions and State and local education agencies in developing parent involvement training.
-- Develop indicators of successful parent involvement that schools and districts can use to set goals and measure progress.
-- Visit districts and schools that have interesting and effective approaches to parent involvement.
-- In conjunction with national organizations, encourage a clearinghouse on parent involvement and choice, or incorporate these topics into existing clearinghouses.

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Appendix

INTRODUCTION TO THE MODELS

The draft models for State legislation and other materials that appear in this Appendix have been prepared in response to the direction in the President's 1988 legislative message for the development of model State legislation that would assist in enhancement and expansion for the exercise of parental choice in education. A number of models are included. Some of these are excerpts from existing State enactments. Others are models that have been drafted within the government for the purpose of expanding the range of ideas available to State legislators and others interested in the issue of parent choice.

These models are presented in the hope that they will make a contribution to State debates regarding the expansion of parental choice in education. Their purpose is to provide States with additional resources and materials for making educational decisions that they alone can make. Moreover, in presenting these models, we do not suggest that any one of them represents the best approach to State legislation to enhance parental choice in education or that there are not equally promising approaches that are not included in this appendix. To our knowledge (except in the case of the Minnesota statute included as Model V), the language or approaches in these models have not been tested in the courts. Neither can we represent that these models, as they may be applied in particular States, will meet all federal constitutional and statutory requirements. Time has not permitted us to assess each of these models against applicable State constitutional or education law in each of the States, and we fully recognize that each of these models would require change and adaptation to meet individual circumstances affecting each State.

Of the first three models, all provide for the use of State and local funds to provide parents with greater opportunity to select for their children schools of choice within the State. Model I is somewhat broader than Models II and III in that it would provide for the provision, upon the request of any parent of a school-aged child in the State, of a certificate that could be used for educational expenses in a public or private participating school. Under Model II, State funds would be available to assist a child wishing to attend a public school outside the school district of residence. Under Model III, certificates for use in a public or private participating school would be issued, upon request, to a parent of a child who attended, or resided in the school attendance area, of a public school that was

determined to be educationally impaired under the procedures set forth in the Model. Model II is drawn from legislation enacted in Minnesota to provide for enrollment options. Portions of Model III are based on legislation enacted in South Carolina designed to identify educationally impaired schools. Other models, presented in the form of excerpts from State statutes, include a Colorado statute designed to provide a "second chance" to school dropouts and a Minnesota enactment that provides tax deductions under Minnesota tax law for certain educational expenses and which is similar to the Minnesota statute considered and upheld in the Supreme Court case of Mueller v. Allen, 463 U.S. 388 (1983).

MODEL I

Summary of Draft Model State Legislation: Enhanced Choice for All Parents

This model is designed to provide for enhanced choice for parents of all school-age children in the State by adding to the existing system of public education in the State wider opportunities for the exercise of parental choice. The parent of any school-age child could request the local educational agency (LEA) to issue a certificate that would be redeemed for educational services at a participating school selected by the parent. The value of the certificate would be set by the SEA by regulation, but could be no more than the average per pupil current expenditures of the affected LEA and could not be redeemed for more than the tuition normally charged by a participating school. The parent would present the certificate to a participating school, which would in turn present the certificate to the SEA for payment.

A private or public school in the State could become a participating school. Under one option in the draft model, the decision to become a participating school would be made by the LEA for a public school after consultation with parents and any advisory or governing body for that school. Under a second option, the public schools in the school district would all become participating schools for children who reside in its school attendance area. The LEA could designate individual schools to become participating schools for children residing outside its school attendance area. Under a third option, the State educational agency (SEA) would require each public school in the State to become a participating school unless it determined that exceptional circumstances rendered the school's participation contrary to the public interest.

A participating school would be required to admit children with certificates up to the limit of the school's capacity after reserving places for children admitted in accordance with the school's regular admissions practices. A participating school would also have to establish criteria for the admission of children with certificates consistent with its regular admissions practices and to enter into an agreement with the SEA providing, among other things, that the school would furnish to children with certificates an education equivalent to that provided to all other children in the school in exchange for the certificate and, if applicable, a supplementary tuition payment.

The SEA would be required to establish a plan for the equitable distribution of the cost of the program between the SEA and LEAs, taking into account the amount of State aid per pupil allocated to children with certificates.

MODEL I

PROVISIONS FOR ENHANCING PARENTAL CHOICE IN EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN

Sec. 1. Purpose.

It is the purpose of this Act to maintain and improve the quality of elementary and secondary education in all schools in the State by providing to all parents in the State enhanced opportunity for the exercise of parental choice in the education of their school-age children.

Sec. 2. Educational certificates.

In order to achieve the purpose described in section 1, the State educational agency shall initiate and carry out a program in which the parent of each school-age child receives from the appropriate local educational agency, on request, a certificate that may be used for educational services at a participating school selected by the child's parent in accordance with this Act.

Sec. 3. Designation of participating schools; admission of children with certificates.

Alternative A

(a) The decision to become a participating school shall be made:

(1) for any public school in the State by the local educational agency responsible for that school, after consultation with parents of children attending that school and any governing or advisory body for that school established by law.

(2) for any private school by those officers granted power to make such decisions by the school's corporate charter.

(b) Subject to subsection (c), a participating school shall admit children with certificates under this Act who apply, up to the limit of the school's capacity, after reserving places for children admitted in accordance with the school's regular admissions practices.

(c) A participating school shall establish criteria for the admission of children with certificates under this Act that are consistent with the admissions criteria that it regularly applies.

Alternative B

(a)(1) The public schools of each local educational agency in the State shall become participating schools with respect to children who reside in the school attendance area of that local educational agency.

(2) A local educational agency may also designate individual schools as participating schools with respect to children who reside outside the attendance area of that agency.

(3) The responsible corporate officials for each private school shall decide whether that school shall become a participating school.

(b) Subject to subsection (c), a participating school shall admit children with certificates under this Act who apply, up to the limit of the school's capacity, after reserving places for children admitted in accordance with the school's regular admissions practices.

(c)(1) A participating school shall establish criteria for the admission of children with certificates that are consistent with the admissions criteria that it regularly applies.

(2) In the case of a participating public school described in subsection (a)(1) or (2), the local educational agency shall establish criteria for the equitable allocation of places if there are insufficient places to serve all such children with certificates requesting such places.

Alternative C

(a)(1) Each public school in the State shall become a participating school unless the State educational agency determines that exceptional circumstances render the participation of such public school contrary to the public interest.

(2) The responsible corporate officials for each private school shall decide whether that school shall become a participating school.

(b) Subject to subsection (c), a participating school shall admit children with certificates under this Act who apply, up to the limit of the school's capacity, after reserving places for children admitted in accordance with the school's regular admissions practices.

(c)(1) A participating school shall establish criteria for the admission of children with certificates that are consistent with the admissions criteria that it regularly applies.

(2) In the case of a participating public school described in subsection (a)(1), the State educational agency shall establish criteria for the equitable allocation of places for children with certificates if there are insufficient places to serve all such children requesting such places.

Sec. 4. Agreements; publication of lists.

(a) A participating school shall enter into an agreement with the State educational agency containing such terms as may be established by regulation of the State educational agency.

(b) Such agreement shall provide that the participating school shall furnish a child who is accepted in the school and who tenders a certificate under this Act (and, if applicable, a supplementary tuition payment required to satisfy any remainder of a participating school's tuition) an education equivalent to that provided to all other children in the school.

(c) The State educational agency shall publish and make available to all parents in the State a list of all participating schools.

Sec. 5. Use of certificates.

A parent of a child with a certificate under this Act may use the certificate for educational services at a participating school only if the child is admitted to the participating school.

Sec. 6. Certificate value.

(a)(1) The State educational agency shall establish the value of a certificate under this Act for an academic year by regulation.

(2) The State educational agency's regulations shall establish the amount for which a certificate may be redeemed by a participating public school that does not regularly charge tuition.

(b) The maximum value of a certificate shall be set at the level of the average per pupil current expenditures of each affected local educational agency, but (except as specified in subsection (a)(2) of this section) no certificate may be redeemed for more than the amount of the tuition and fees regularly charged by the participating school providing the educational services.

Sec. 7. Cost allocation; redemption of certificates.

(a) In consultation with affected local educational agencies, the State educational agency shall develop and carry out a plan for the equitable distribution of the costs of the certificate program authorized under this Act between local educational agencies and the State educational agency. In developing this plan, the State educational agency shall take into account the amount of State aid (allocated to local educational agencies in the State on a per-pupil basis) that is attributable to a child with a certificate provided under this Act.

(b) A parent of a child with a certificate under this Act shall present the certificate to the participating school that the child attends. The participating school shall present the certificate for payment or redemption to the State educational agency in accordance with its regulations.

Sec. 8. Administrative provisions.

(a) Certificates received under this Act are not income for State income tax purposes.

(b) Each participating school that is not a public school shall provide to the State educational agency an assurance that it is in compliance with appropriate nondiscrimination requirements as set forth in regulations or the State educational agency.

(c) Each participating school shall publish or otherwise make available information regarding:

(1) its participation in the certificate program;

(2) its program of instruction;

(3) achievement data regarding children attending the school (which data may be stated in the aggregate);

(4) the incidence of drug abuse;

(5) school discipline and safety; and

(6) [other matters to be specified by the State legislature].

(d) The State educational agency may delegate functions under this Act to a local educational agency or other political subdivision of the State and, in carrying out its functions under the Act, may contract for services with any public or private educational organization, agency, or institution.

Sec. 9. Program evaluation.

The State educational agency shall arrange for an independent evaluation of the certificate program authorized under this Act, including an evaluation of the effect of that program on academic achievement, and submit the evaluation to the Governor and to each house of the legislature by January 1, _____.

Sec. 10. Definitions.

As used in this Act --

(1) the term "parent" has the meaning given to it by regulations of the State educational agency;

(2) the term "participating school" means a public or private school located in the State that enters into an agreement with the State educational agency in accordance with section 4;

(3) the term "private school" means a school that is not maintained with public funds, that charges tuition or fees for the services it provides, and that is in compliance with the laws of the State;

(4) the term "public school" means a school that is administered by a State or local public agency; and

(5) the term "school" means a school that is authorized to provide elementary and/or secondary education under State law.

MODEL II

Summary of Draft Model State Legislation: Enrollment Options Approach

The attached draft legislation represents one possible approach that would address the undertaking in the President's legislative message to provide model State legislation that would afford additional educational choice to parents. This approach is modeled after the Minnesota Open Enrollment Options program. Under that program (and under the attached draft), a student may, with the assistance of the State, attend a public school in a school district in which the student does not reside.

The student's parent would apply for attendance at a non-resident school. The non-resident school district would advise the parent within an established timeframe whether the application was accepted or rejected. The non-resident school district would be obliged to adopt standards for consideration of such applications. Acceptance or rejection could not be based on previous academic achievement, athletic activities, handicapping conditions, proficiency in the English language, national origin or race (unless necessary to ensure compliance with a desegregation plan). Provision is made for transportation within the non-resident district and, under some circumstances, within the resident district. State aid follows the transferring student from the resident to the non-resident district. State money is thus used to facilitate expansion of the educational choice available to the student and the parent.

ENROLLMENT OPTIONS ACT

Sec. 1. Purpose. The purpose of this Act is to improve educational achievement and to enhance the opportunity for parental choice in education by providing additional options to pupils in the State to enroll in public schools in school districts throughout the State without regard to pupil residence.

Sec. 2. Establishment. The State educational agency shall establish an enrollment options program to enable pupils residing in the State to attend public schools in school districts other than the ones in which they reside.

Sec. 3. Application procedures. (a) The parent of a pupil wishing to attend a school in a non-resident school district shall submit an application to the non-resident district.

(b) The parent shall submit the application for a particular school year at a time set by the State educational agency on a form provided by it. The parent may request a particular school.

(c) Upon agreement of the non-resident district, the deadlines in subsection (b) may be waived.

Sec. 4. Desegregation plans. A school district that has a desegregation plan approved by the State educational agency, by a court, or by the United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, may, in accordance with regulations of the State educational agency, limit the number of pupils who transfer into [or out of] the district under this Act if necessary to ensure compliance with the plan.

Sec. 5. Basis for decision. (a) A school district shall adopt specific, written standards for acceptance and rejection of applications under this Act. Standards may include consideration of the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or school building. Subject to subsection (b), standards may not include consideration of a pupil's previous academic achievement, athletic or other extra-curricular activities or ability, handicapping condition, proficiency in the English language, national origin, or race (except where necessary in accordance with section 4).

(b) In considering an application under this Act, a non-resident school district may apply its usual requirements for admission to a magnet school or a program designed to serve the gifted and talented.

Sec. 6. Non-resident district procedures. Within 60 days of receiving an application under section 3, a non-resident district shall notify the applicant parent and the resident district in writing whether the application has been accepted or rejected. If an application is rejected, the district shall state in the notification the reason or reasons for its rejection.

Sec. 7. Transportation. (a) If requested by the parent of a pupil participating in the program under this Act, the non-resident district shall provide transportation within that district. The State educational agency shall reimburse the non-resident district for the costs of this transportation.

(b) A resident district shall reimburse the parent for the costs of transportation from the pupil's residence to the border of the non-resident district if the pupil is from a family whose income is at or below the poverty level as determined by regulations of the State educational agency. The State educational agency shall reimburse the resident district for the costs of this transportation.

Sec. 8. Graduation. A district serving a non-resident pupil under this Act shall accept credits toward graduation that were awarded to that pupil by another district and shall graduate a non-resident pupil if the pupil meets the non-resident district's own graduation requirements.

Sec. 9. Information. In order to enable a parent to make an informed decision about enrollment options under this Act, each school district shall make available information about the district, its schools, programs, policies, and procedures. The State educational agency shall promulgate regulations regarding the information that a district must make available, including objective data on individual school achievement levels and (in the case of secondary schools) drop-out and graduation rates.

Sec. 10. State aid. The State educational agency shall reallocate State education aid between the resident and the non-resident district, as follows:

(a) Any State aid that is now allocated on a per-pupil basis shall be allocated to the district that a pupil actually attends.

(b) For each type of State aid not now allocated on a per-pupil basis, the State educational agency shall review the average effects of a single pupil's transfer on the costs that that type of aid is meant to defray for both the resident and the non-resident district. After such review, the State educational agency shall promulgate a formula that results in an equitable allocation to both districts.

Sec. 11. Definitions. As used in this Act --

(a) the term "school" means a school that is operated by a public school district and that provides elementary and/or secondary education in accordance with State law; and

(b) the term "parent" has the meaning given to it by regulations of the State educational agency.

MODEL III

Summary of Draft Model State Legislation: Bankruptcy Approach

The focus of this proposal is on children who are trapped in inferior schools that fail to address their educational needs. A State educational agency (SEA) would establish criteria and standards for assessing school quality. It would apply the criteria and standards to schools in the State. If a school were found to fall below the minimum standards to a degree that the quality of education was impaired, the SEA would refer the matter to a review committee for recommendations. If the local educational agency (LEA) failed to follow the committee's recommendations, as approved by the SEA, or if the SEA determined that the school would in any event be unable to correct the situation, the SEA would determine the school to be in a state of continuing educational impairment. The SEA would then be obliged to take certain specified remedial steps to address the situation.

One of these required steps would be the issuance, on request, or a certificate to the parent of each school-age child attending an educationally impaired school or residing in its school attendance area. The certificate could be used to obtain educational services from any participating school. A participating school would be a public or private school that enters into an agreement with the SEA to participate in the program. The SEA could designate any public school in the State to be a participating school unless it determined that exceptional circumstances rendered the participation of the school contrary to the public interest or unless the school was the subject of a determination of continuing educational impairment. The appropriate corporate officials of each private school would decide whether that school would become a participating school.

A participating school would undertake to admit children with certificates up to the limit of its capacity after reserving places for children admitted in accordance with its regular admissions practices. A participating school would establish criteria for determining admission of children with certificates consistent with its regular admissions practices. If available places were insufficient to serve all children with certificates who requested places in the school, a participating public school would apply criteria established by the SEA for the equitable allocation of these places. These criteria would have to be consistent with the school's regular admissions practices.

The value of the certificate would be set by the SEA by regulation but could be no more than the average per pupil current expenditures of the affected local educational agency and could not be redeemed for more than the tuition normally charged by a participating school. The parent would present the certificate to a participating school, which would in turn present the certificate to the State educational agency for payment. The school would be obliged to provide educational services for the payment of the certificate amount equivalent to the services provided to non-certificate-bearing children. A child's eligibility for a certificate would continue for a period of time after the impaired school had resumed quality service.

PROVISIONS FOR ENSURING QUALITY EDUCATION IN LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES FOR ALL CHILDREN

Sec. 1. Purpose.

It is the purpose of this Act to maintain and improve the quality of elementary and secondary education in all schools in the State; to provide improved methods for measuring and assessing the quality of education in each school; and to provide (through the exercise of parental choice and other means) for the delivery of effective educational services to children in schools where the quality of education is found to be substantially impaired.

Sec. 2. Development and application of criteria.

(a) The State educational agency, in consultation with all local educational agencies in the State and with parents and other individuals and organizations knowledgeable regarding education, shall develop (1) criteria for evaluating the quality of elementary and secondary education in each local educational agency in the State, and (2) minimum standards of educational quality related to those criteria that a school administered by a local educational agency should meet.

(b) The criteria must address, but need not be limited to:

(1) The results of standardized tests that measure both minimal competencies and higher order skills;

(2) dropout rates;

(3) deficiencies in accreditation of individual schools;

(4) failure rates on examinations given to secondary school students prior to graduation;

(5) incidence of drug abuse; and

(6) school discipline and safety.

(c) The State educational agency shall publish these criteria and minimum standards throughout the State in one or more newspapers of general circulation and shall provide a statement of these criteria and standards to each local educational agency in the State.

(d) Prior to January 1, [ ] and by January 1 of each following year, the State educational agency shall apply the criteria and standards adopted in accordance with subsection (a) to appropriate data. These data shall be for the most recently completed school year and collected for each local educational agency in the State, in accordance with regulations of the State educational agency. In applying these criteria and standards, the State educational agency shall consult with parents in the area served by the local educational agency. The State educational agency shall make public the results of the process carried out under this subsection and section 3.

(e) If the State educational agency determines, in accordance with subsection (d), that all schools administered by a local educational agency meet the minimum standards established in accordance with subsection (a), the State educational agency shall so notify the local educational agency.

(f) If the State educational agency determines, in accordance with subsection (d), that one or more schools administered by a local educational agency fail to meet the minimum standards but that the failure does not indicate a substantial impairment of the quality of education in that school or schools, it shall notify the local educational agency and shall make public such finding. The local educational agency, or the State educational agency in consultation with the local educational agency, shall develop a plan for addressing the problems and shall monitor the implementation of this plan.

Sec. 3. Substantial impairment of quality of education.

(a) If the State educational agency determines, in accordance with section 2(d), that one or more schools administered by a local educational agency fail to meet the standards and that the failure indicates a substantial impairment of the quality of education in that school or schools, the State educational agency shall so notify the local educational agency and shall afford that local educational agency and affected persons an opportunity to comment on such determination. The State educational agency shall make public its determination and the comments of the local educational agency.

(b) If, after considering the comments of the local educational agency, the State educational agency still concludes that the quality of education in that school or schools is substantially impaired, the State educational agency shall, within 30 days of reaching such conclusion, appoint a review committee, composed of persons knowledgeable about elementary and secondary education, to study educational programs in the school district of the local educational agency and to identify the factors contributing to the impairment of the quality of

education in that school or schools. The committee shall, after consultation with the local educational agency and with parents in the area served by the school or schools, report to the State educational agency within 60 days of its appointment. The report of the Committee shall be made available to the public.

(c) Within 30 days after receiving the report of the review committee, the State educational agency shall formulate recommendations for improving the quality of education in the local educational agency with respect to the school or schools that are the subject of the determination under subsection (b). The State educational agency shall communicate them to the local educational agency and shall, in consultation with that local educational agency, develop a detailed plan for the implementation of these recommendations.

(d) If the recommendations specified in subsection (c) are not satisfactorily implemented by the beginning of the succeeding academic year, or, if the State educational agency concludes that the impairment of the quality of education identified in a school or schools in accordance with subsection (b) will not be remedied within that succeeding year, the State educational agency shall determine the local educational agency administering that school or schools to be in a state of continuing educational impairment and shall take the steps specified in section 4.

Sec. 4. Steps required of State educational agency in cases of continuing impairment.

(a) In the case of a determination of continuing educational impairment under section 3(d), the State educational agency shall, with respect to a school or schools subject to that determination --

(1) provide technical assistance to the local educational agency;

(2) provide such additional educational resources to such agency in the form of funds, personnel, or other assistance as the State educational agency determines to be needed;

(3) develop and monitor the implementation of an emergency plan to meet the educational needs of the children enrolled in the school or schools; and

(4) institute, for children who attend or reside in the school attendance area of the school or schools, a program of educational certificates as set forth in section 5.

(b) The State educational agency may take such other steps as may be appropriate in accordance with its regulations.

Sec. 5. Educational certificates.

(a) The purpose of this section is to enable children who attend or reside in the school attendance area of a school that is the subject of a determination of continuing educational impairment under section 3(d) to benefit from educational services in educational settings other than the schools that they would normally attend.

(b) In order to achieve the purpose described in subsection (a), the State educational agency shall initiate and carry out a program in which the parent of each school-age child attending or residing in the school attendance area of a school that is the subject of a determination of continuing educational impairment under section 3(d) receives from the State educational agency, on request, a certificate that may be used for educational services at a participating school selected by the child's parent in accordance with this section.

(c)(1)(A) The State educational agency may require each public school within the State to become a participating school unless the State educational agency determines that exceptional circumstances render the participation of such school contrary to the public interest or unless that school has been the subject of a determination of continuing educational impairment.

(B) The appropriate corporate officials of each private school within the state shall decide whether such school shall become a participating school.

(2) A participating school shall admit children with certificates under this section who apply, up to the limit of the school's capacity, after reserving places for children admitted in accordance with the school's regular admissions practices.

(3)(A) A participating school shall establish criteria for the admission of children with certificates under this section consistent with the admission criteria that it regularly applies.

(B) The State educational agency shall establish criteria, consistent with subparagraph (A), for the equitable allocation, by each participating public school, of places for children with such certificates if there are insufficient places to serve all such children who request such places.

(4)(A) A participating school shall enter into an agreement with the State educational agency containing such terms as may be established by regulations of the State educational agency.

(B) Such agreement shall provide that the participating school shall furnish a child who is accepted in the school and who tenders a certificate under this section (and, if applicable a supplementary tuition payment required to satisfy any remainder of a participating school's tuition, an education equivalent to that provided all other children in the school in exchange for the certificate.

(5) The State educational agency shall publish and make available to each parent in the State with a child in a school that is the subject of a determination under section 3(d) a list of all participating schools in the State.

(d) A parent of a child with a certificate under this section may use the certificate for educational services at a participating school only if the child is admitted to the participating school.

(e) The State educational agency shall establish the value of a certificate under this section for an academic year by regulation. The maximum value of a certificate shall be set at the level of the average per pupil current expenditures of each affected local educational agency, but no certificate may be redeemed for more than the amount of the tuition and fees regularly charged by a participating school for its educational services. The State educational agency's regulations shall establish the amount for which a certificate may be redeemed by a public participating school that does not regularly charge tuition.

(f)(1) In consultation with affected local educational agencies, the State educational agency shall develop and carry out a plan for the equitable distribution of the costs of the certificate program authorized under this section between a local educational agency subject to a determination under section 3(d) and the State educational agency. In developing this plan, the State educational agency shall take into account the amount of State aid (allocated to local educational agencies in the State on a per-pupil basis) that is attributable to a child with a certificate provided under this section.

(2) A parent of a child with a certificate under this section shall present the certificate to the participating school that the child attends. The participating school shall present the certificate for payment to the State educational agency in accordance with its regulations.

(g) A child whose parent receives a certificate for an academic year shall, subject to the provisions of this Act, continue to be eligible for a certificate for a period of [3] years following a determination by the State educational agency that the continuing educational impairment has ceased in the local educational agency.

Sec. 6. Administrative provisions.

(a) Certificates received under section 5 are not income for State income tax purposes.

(b) Each participating school that is not a public school shall provide to the State educational agency an assurance that it is in compliance with appropriate nondiscrimination requirements as set forth in regulations of the State educational agency.

(c) Each participating school shall publish or otherwise make available information regarding:

(1) its participation in the certificate program;

(2) its program of instruction;

(3) achievement data regarding children attending the school (which data may be stated in the aggregate);

(4) the incidence of drug abuse;

(5) school discipline and safety; and

(6) [other matters to be specified by the State legislature].

(d) The State educational agency may delegate functions under this Act to a local educational agency or other political subdivision of the State and, in carrying out its functions under the Act, may contract for services with any public or private educational organization, agency, or institution.

Sec. 7. Program evaluation.

The State educational agency shall arrange for an independent evaluation of the certificate program authorized under section 5, and submit the evaluation to the Governor and to each house of the legislature by January 1, _____.

Sec. 8. Definitions.

As used in this Act --

(1) the term "parent" has the meaning given to it by regulations of the State educational agency;

(2) the term "participating school" means a public or private, nonprofit school located in the State that enters into an agreement with the State educational agency in accordance with section 5(c);

(3) the term "private school" means a school that is not maintained with public funds, that charges tuition or fees for the services it provides, and that is in compliance with the laws of the State;

(4) the term "public school" means a school that is administered by a State or local public agency; and

(5) the term "school" means a school that is authorized to provide elementary and/or secondary education under State law.

MODEL IV

Second Chance Program

Article 52 of title 22 of the Colorado statutes (attached) authorizes a Second Chance Pilot Program for Problem Students in that State. This program is designed to give these children a second chance by providing a variety of educational opportunities for them. To be eligible to participate in the Second Chance program, a child must be a school dropout between sixteen and twenty-one years of age who has been recommended for participation in the program by the child's school district of residence (resident school district). The concurrence of the child's parent and the receiving district are required. Once enrolled, a student who makes satisfactory progress may continue in the program until the student obtains a high school diploma or its equivalent or until reaching the age of twenty-one.

The statute lists the schools that are eligible to apply to the State department of education to participate in the Second Chance program. They include public schools located in school districts that have a dropout rate above the statewide average dropout rate and in contiguous districts, as well as public schools offering vocational, technical or adult education.

Under the program, an eligible student may apply to the school board of the resident school district to participate in the Second Chance program. The resident school district assists the student in enrolling in an eligible school and provides other services in connection with the program. The resident school district counts the student enrolled in the Second Chance program in the school district's residence base. It transmits, to the school district or eligible school enrolling the child, eighty-five percent of its authorized revenue base per pupil or the actual educational cost of the program provided, whichever is less. A portion of the remaining money is transferred to the State department of education.

The statute specifies the duties of the State department of education in the program and directs the State board of education to promulgate such rules and regulations as are necessary to implement the program.

SECOND CHANCE PROGRAM

ARTICLE 52

Second Chance Pilot Program for Problem Students

22-52-101. Legislative declaration.
22-52-102. Eligible students.
22-52-103. Eligible schools.
22-52-104. Application — payment.
22-52-105. Duties of the department of education.
22-52-106. Rules and regulations.
22-52-107. Funding of second chance program.
22-52-108. Repeal of article.

22-52-101. Legislative declaration. The general assembly hereby declares that the problem of children who do not succeed in the educational system is of grave concern. It is the intent of the general assembly that this article give these children a second chance by providing a variety of educational opportunities for such children, opportunities for educators to use their skills, talent, and creativity, and increased parental involvement in the education process.

Source: Added. L. 85, p. 722, § 3.

22-52-102. Eligible students. (1) In order to be eligible to participate in the second chance program, a child shall be a dropout between sixteen and twenty-one years of age who has been recommended for participation in the program by his school district of residence with the concurrence of the child, his parent, and the receiving district; but no such child shall be eligible to participate in the second chance program if he has achieved a high school diploma or its equivalent.

(2) Once enrolled in the program, a student who makes satisfactory progress may continue in the program until he obtains a high school diploma or its equivalent or until he reaches twenty-one years of age. A student who does not progress satisfactorily may be dropped from the program but shall be eligible to reapply until he reaches twenty years of age.

Source: Added, L. 85, p. 722, § 3.

22-52-103. Eligible schools. (1) Any of the following schools are eligible to apply to the department of education to participate in the second chance program:

(a) Public schools located in school districts that have a dropout rate above the statewide average dropout rate;

(b) Public schools in districts contiguous to districts specified in paragraph (a) of this subsection (1);

(c) Public schools offering vocational, technical, or adult education programs;

(d) Schools operated by boards of cooperative services.

(2) As a condition of continued participation in the second chance program, an eligible school shall provide to the school district in which it is located an accurate monthly report on each eligible student's attendance and performance.

Source: Added, L. 85, p. 722, § 3.

22-52-104. Application - payment. (1) After July 1, 1986, and each school year thereafter, an eligible student may apply to the school board of his school district of residence to participate in the second chance program. Application and acceptance procedures shall be governed by rules and regulations promulgated by the state board of education. The school district of residence shall process an eligible student's application, assist the student in enrolling in the eligible school, counsel the students and parents of students in the second chance program concerning the availability of services the child or family may need, and monitor the performance and progress of each student in the second chance program.

(2) The school district of residence of a student enrolled in the second chance program shall count the student in its attendance entitlement pursuant to rules and regulations promulgated by the state board of education. The school district shall also provide to the department of education such information as it may require. Pursuant to rules and regulations promulgated by the state board of education, the school district of residence of the student shall transmit monthly eighty-five percent of the district of residence's authorized revenue base per pupil of attendance entitlement to the school district or eligible school enrolling the student, or the actual educational cost of the program provided, whichever is less. Of that portion of the moneys remaining to the school district of residence, the school district shall transmit two-thirds to the department of education and retain the remaining one-third for implementation of its requirements under the second chance program. These payment procedures shall continue as long as the student continues to reside in the original district of residence, continues to attend the eligible school, and progresses in a satisfactory manner.

(3) The duties of the school district of residence of the eligible student specified in subsection (1) of this section may be developed under contract with boards of cooperative services in districts with eligible participating students and eligible participating schools. School districts which are not in boards of cooperative services may contract with such boards for cooperative programming.

Source: Added, L. 85, p. 723, § 3.

22-52-105. Duties of the department of education. (1) The department of education shall have the following duties regarding the second chance program:

(a) To notify all school districts of the procedures to be followed in processing applications from eligible students;

(b) To gather information on participating schools and advertise the program to potentially eligible students and their parents;

(c) To receive enrollment information and audit the students and schools participating in the program;

(d) To provide assistance as requested to participating school districts, schools, students, and parents;

(e) To hear appeals of disputes arising between participating school districts, schools, students, and parents;

(f) To report to the general assembly by January 31, 1987, and annually thereafter.

Source: Added. L. 85, p. 723, § 3.

22-52-106. Rules and regulations. (1) The state board of education shall promulgate such rules and regulations as are necessary to implement this article, pursuant to section 24-4-103, C.R.S. Such rules and regulations shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

(a) Student eligibility criteria considering the special characteristics of the student, the educational record of the student to the time of application, and, if the student is enrolled in a public school program, the opportunities available to the student within that setting;

(b) Criteria for eligible schools emphasizing experimental approaches such as a career development curriculum and experiential education;

(c) Procedures for application by eligible schools and for selecting schools to participate in the second chance program;

(d) Procedures for coordinating eligible participating students and eligible participating schools, including procedures to establish a lottery system when the number of applicants for an eligible school exceeds the available space;

(e) Procedures for notifying the department of education and the student's school district of residence should the student stop attending or fail to make satisfactory progress;

(f) Procedures for resolving disputes arising between school districts, schools, students, and parents consistent with article 4 of title 24, C.R.S.; and

(g) Financial transactions.

Source: Added. L. 85, p. 724, § 3.

22-52-107. Funding of second chance program. It is the intent of the general assembly that, after the initial appropriation made to the department of education for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1985, the responsibilities and duties specified in this article shall be performed by the department

of education and the participating school districts through the funding available pursuant to the "Public School Finance Act of 1973", article 50 of this title.

Source: Added, L. 85, p. 724, § 3.

22-52-108. Repeal of article. This article is repealed, effective July 1, 1987.

Source: Added, L. 85, p. 724, § 3.

MODEL V

Minnesota Tax Deduction Statute

Subdivision 19b of section 290.01 of the Minnesota Statutes Annotated (Supp. 1988) (attached) provides for certain subtractions from federal income for State tax purposes for individuals and certain other taxpayers. Among these subtractions is an amount paid for tuition, textbooks, and transportation of each dependent attending an elementary or secondary school in Minnesota and other named States. Not to exceed $650 may be deducted for each dependent in grades kindergarten to six, and $1,000 may be deducted for each dependent in grades seven to 12.

Subd. 19b. **Subtractions from federal taxable income.** For individuals, estates, and trusts, there shall be subtracted from federal taxable income:

(1) interest income on obligations of any authority, commission, or instrumentality of the United States to the extent includable in taxable income for federal income tax purposes but exempt from state income tax under the laws of the United States;

(2) if included in federal taxable income, the amount of any overpayment of income tax to Minnesota or to any other state, for any previous taxable year, whether the amount is received as a refund or as a credit to another taxable year's income tax liability; and

(3) the amount paid to others not to exceed $650 for each dependent in grades kindergarten to six and $1,000 for each dependent in grades seven to 12, for tuition, textbooks, and transportation of each dependent in attending an elementary or secondary school situated in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, or Wisconsin, wherein a resident of this state may legally fulfill the state's compulsory attendance laws, which is not operated for profit, and which adheres to the provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964[1] and chapter 363. As used in this clause, "textbooks" includes books and other instructional materials and equipment used in elementary and secondary schools in teaching only those subjects legally and commonly taught in public elementary and secondary schools in this state. "Textbooks" does not include instructional books and materials used in the teaching of religious tenets, doctrines, or worship, the purpose of which is to instill such tenets, doctrines, or worship, nor does it include books or materials for, or transportation to, extracurricular activities including sporting events, musical or dramatic events, speech activities, driver's education, or similar programs. In order to qualify for the subtraction under this clause the taxpayer must elect to itemize deductions under section 63(e) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended through December 31, 1986.[2]

[1] 42 U.S.C.A. §§ 1971 et seq., 1981 et seq.

[2] 26 U.S.C.A. § 63(e).

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